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From War to Peace Pamphlets.

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The War

and International

Good Faith.

By C. F. RYDER.

On the efforts which are being made
for a Conference of the Neutral Powers.

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The War and International Good Faith.

By C. F. RYDER.

*A letter on the efforts which are being made
for a Conference of the Neutral Powers.*

DEAR MR. JUDGE,—I wish I could be of service to yourself and others in your efforts to draw attention to the rights and duties of neutrals under the Hague Convention with a view to considering the possibility of appealing to them in the interests of peace. Unless the said Convention was mere mockery and humbug it gave an authoritative judicial recognition to the rights of neutrals, and, in effect, acknowledged that they had claims to consideration at the hands of belligerents which would justify them in giving the latter something more than mere platonic advice.

The sanctity of contracts must be preserved at all costs in the case of international, as well as of individual, bargaining, and I am willing that two of my sons in the forces of the Crown should risk their lives to help to secure respect for treaty obligations, but, being something of a humanitarian as well as a heavily taxed British Citizen, I venture to think that the time has come when we may well

consider how bitter for everybody that "bitter end," of which we all talk so lightly, is likely to be.

Having wide agricultural, as well as commercial, interests, it is borne in upon me continually, as a matter of daily experience, how serious the drain on rural England in men (and also in horses), is becoming: and of course the strain on France, on Russia and on Germany is infinitely worse. Journalists sometimes talk lightly of a little blood-letting as being good for nations, but unfortunately, in war we draw the life-blood from the arteries while the boils and blains which weaken the body politic go unlanced. The healthiest, the strongest go forth as food for powder while, at any rate in this country, the foolishlest and the feeblest remain. The agricultural labourer is taken, but the corner-boy is left to continue his career as a mere cigarette-holder and parasite of society. Seriously, if war is ever to be eugenically profitable we must take steps that the weakest shall go not to the wall but to the wars.

A lady reading the list of supporters of the movement tells me that there are no names in it which would carry, as those of experts, any weight with the public. Well, in this age of Democracy and of expert exploiters thereof, what we need for our purpose is men of independent views without any axe to grind, ready to undergo some personal

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sacrifice if they can help, in however small a degree, to stay the bloodshed which now makes mourners from Belfast to Tokio, and from Bordeaux to Vladivostock. We shall be ridiculed, doubtless, as counterparts of the tailors of Tooley Street, but the tailors of Tooley Street were wrong, not because as individuals they did what they could to promote their views, but because they attached ridiculous importance to their collective influence. If some of us are derided as being feeble as conies and as foolish as babes, we may remind ourselves that there is many a soldier in every army who, without being able to shoot or strike effectively, helps by counting as one, and in the day of battle may be of real use by receiving in his own breast the bullet intended for a better man. "Character," as the Zulus say, "is Baas of All," and the least important of us may comfort himself for his lack of political eminence by the thought that, after all, personal conviction and individual effort form the great lever by which, in things moral, the world is moved.

Many object that the time is inopportune for any movement towards peace, seeing that, beyond 300,000 corpses—Austrian, Belgian, British, French, German, Hungarian, Japanese, Russian and Serbian—and twice that number of maimed and crippled men, nothing absolutely decisive has been so far achieved on either side.

The answer to this criticism is, briefly, that it is precisely when men are exhausted by fighting, without having much to show for it, on either side, that they may be most usefully approached. When one party is triumphant and the other humiliated, it is difficult to make suggestions without, on the one hand, seeming to wish to snatch the fruits of victory from the winning side, or, on the other, appearing to wish the losers to accept the inevitability of final defeat. The former answer our approaches by a cry of "*Væ Victis*," and the latter by declaring that only the first round has been fought and that far from wishing to plead for mercy they desire nothing better than to be left alone to wreck a terrible vengeance upon opponents flushed with a momentary and deceptive success.

Germany would of course deny that she desired peace, but this is merely "*Common form*"—part of the bluff which is so often the stock-in-trade of diplomatists as well as of lawyers. For Germany, with all the world against her, and fighting at odds of six to one, must not only desire but really yearn for peace, and this not from any craven fears or cowardly instinct but simply because she must wish to preserve her existence as a nation. An individual or a family or even a clan may die fighting, leaving women and children to the mercy of the conquerors, but the picture of all Germans of fighting age

falling, sword in hand, and leaving 50,000,000 women and children and crippled and aged and helpless, without bread-winners, is too appalling even for thought. Self-sacrifice, in other words, is only appropriate on a moderate scale, and the man—be he King or Emperor or journalist—who asks that all the manhood of a nation should perish, even in defence of the national flag, is nothing less than a criminal. For Germany literally to fight to a finish would mean such an appalling legacy of misery to the conquering powers, and entail such untold burdens upon them as well as upon neutrals—unless they discarded all the teachings of Christianity—that Humanity would be staggered indeed. Further, in the case of a family, or even in that of a clan, those who fight to die are presumably volunteers, while in the case of a great power it is perfectly certain that a very large portion of the die-hards—possibly the majority—would have to be coerced into self-sacrifice. What makes the memory of Thermopylæ so glorious is the fact that the Greeks sacrificed their lives of their own free will, while the hordes of Xerxes had no choice in the matter. In a word, if we study history and human nature we shall discover that while *Germania contra mundum* is magnificent, it is neither war nor commonsense. What it really means is heavy losses to the winner and most horrible butchery on the

losing side. We need not, however, labour this point, since it is very doubtful whether any European nation could ever fight to a finish even if it would—the Socialists would do their best to make such a thing impossible, and the power of the Socialists in Germany is unusually great.

The writer is not one of those who believe that wars will ever cease, but he holds that we may reasonably hope to limit their number and extent in the future, first by sedulously inculcating the doctrine of personal responsibility—*i.e.*, by trying to make Democracy a reality rather than a sham—and, secondly, by enlarging the recognised rights of neutrals so as to enable them to bring the greatest possible pressure upon combatant nations. The present war has proved, up to the hilt, the truth of Mr. Norman Angell's teaching that the commercial and financial interests of all civilised peoples are inextricably bound up together. The United States have no direct interest in the questions at issue, but they are profoundly affected by the war, and the manufacturer in Pennsylvania and the financier in New York may both be ruined by the results of battles fought in Flanders and Picardy. For the truth is that while armies and navies and custom houses are meant to keep peoples asunder it is the great object of science and education to bring them together, by annihilating time and space, by

facilitating trade, by effacing local and national distinctions. Thus science labours to bring London and Berlin within a few hours journey of each other at the very same time that we spend countless millions on printers' ink and diplomacy and gunpowder in order to keep them apart. "Crush Germany and capture German trade" is a very good headline from the journalistic spitfires' standpoint, but it is small consolation to the Bradford cloth merchant, who knows that by killing his German customers he cannot force them, at this juncture, to pay their debts, while he loses German custom for ever.

This, however, is a digression; what we have really to recognise is that the interests of every civilised nation in every other have so vastly increased during the last 50 years that neutrals may reasonably expect to have such a voice in the conduct and settlement of international disputes as they have never demanded before.

Germany's sin has been great, since, with all her civilisation and science, she has acted upon the devil's doctrines—as Ruskin would have called them—which are embodied in the phrase "minorities must suffer," and "my country, right or wrong." By the first she has claimed the right to trample on a small nation—just as politicians at home claim the right to ignore the wishes of small

sections of a great people—and by the second she justifies methods of warfare which recall those by which King Leopold and his minions carried death and destruction to countless thousands of miserable blacks in the vast territory of Congo. “My country, right or wrong,” means, indeed, nothing more or less than this, that a citizen is justified in using every method, right or wrong, by which his country may be strengthened and supported. Let English writers beware how they advocate a doctrine which, when practised by their enemies, has shocked the whole civilised world.

In asking you to use £50 to investigate the possibility of peace I will only repeat that I know full well how futile our efforts must appear. Their success or failure, however, is no concern of ours, our sole business being to see that we never fail to try, while the mere effort to stop the deluge of blood which now threatens to engulf mankind is worth the endurance of many jeers. War is a terrible gleaner of the pick and flower of a nation. Famine takes the old and the feeble, and Pestilence, waiting upon her, follows suit, but the sword claims the youngest, the strongest, the bravest, the best.

Yours very truly,

C. F. RYDER.

Thurlow, Suffolk,

October 29th, 1914.

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No. 1.—The War and the Neutral Powers. By Mark H. Judge. Proposal for a Conference of Neutral Powers. Peace Conferences at The Hague and International Law. Letter to Forty-four Foreign Ministers. Some Opinions on the Proposal. Meetings and Resolutions. The International Law Association. Second Edition. 5'' × 8'', 32 pages in cover. Threepence. P. S. King & Son Ltd., and all Booksellers.

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From War to Peace Pamphlets.

No. 1.—The War and the Neutral Powers.

THE proposal made in Pamphlet No. 1 is summed up in the concluding paragraph of Section II. as follows:—"Thus Conventions solemnly made by the German Government with the civilized nations of the whole world are, within seven years, utterly disregarded by that Government, which has invaded the territories of two Neutral Powers, declared in these Conventions to be inviolable, and in one case has bombarded unfortified cities and laid waste the country side. Luxemburg protested but was too weak to resist. Belgium protested and is valiantly resisting. The other Neutral Powers who were parties to the Conventions cannot but condemn and protest against this outrage on one of the first principles of civilized life. To fail in doing so would be to condone this breach of International Law, and, indeed, to invite the German Government to invade any other neutral territory that may stand in its way. The least the Neutral Powers can do is to meet in Conference to consider forthwith how they should deal with the situation which Germany's breach of their and her own Conventions has brought about."

The Opinions are given in quotations from upwards of forty letters on the proposal, including letters from Mr. Frederic Harrison, Lord Kinnaird, Dr. G. B. Hunter, Sir Henry Vansittart-Neale, K.C.B, Dr. E. C. Clark (late Professor of Civil Law, Cambridge), Mr. A. Vernon Harcourt, F.R.S., Professor W. M. Flinders Petrie, F.R.S., Mr. C. F. Ryder (Thurlow, Suffolk), Rev. Paul R. Frothingham (late Preacher to Harvard University), Mr. Thomas Hardy, Senator Edvard Wavrinsky (Sweden), Rev. Walter Walsh, D.D., Dr. F. Arthur Sibly, Sir Arthur Clay, Bt., Mr. J. Lewis

Paton (Head Master of Manchester Grammar School), Lady Margaret Sackville, Mr. T. F. Victor Buxton, Rt. Hon. Dr. Robert Farquharson, Sir Arthur W. Pinero Jonkheer de Jong Van Beek en Donk (The Hague), and Ernest E. Williams, Barrister-at-Law.

The pamphlet includes the letter sent to the Foreign Ministers of the 44 States which took part in The Hague Peace Conference of 1907.

Early editions of the incomplete pamphlet sent to Neutral Countries were welcomed, and applications are coming for a further supply. Writing from Stockholm, on October 28th, Senator Edvard Wavrinsky says "I would be much obliged for a dozen copies of the pamphlet, it ought to be widely spread."

There can be no doubt that the appeal to the Neutral Powers would be greatly strengthened by sending the pamphlet to numbers of public men and associations in these countries throughout the world, as well as to the Members of both our own Houses of Parliament, Members of the Privy Council, the Municipal Corporations, Chambers of Commerce, and other public bodies.

To do this will involve considerable expenditure, and it is hoped that those who feel it should be done will contribute towards the cost of doing it. Contributions may be sent to Mr. Judge, 7 Pall Mall, London, S.W.

Copies of the four pamphlets issued may be obtained of the Publishers, Messrs. P. S. King & Son Limited, Orchard House, Westminster, or through Booksellers and Newsagents.